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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Irrigation and Stormwater Compliance Requirements and Fees

For the past year the County of San Diego has been conducting an extensive outreach effort to provide the business community and County residents information regarding the County's Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance. The County Board of Supervisors adopted this ordinance in February 2002 in accordance with the requirements of San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Order No. 2001-01 otherwise known as the RWQCB Urban Stormwater Permit.

The County Stormwater Ordinance applies to specific facilities and activities, the majority of which are located within the unincorporated areas of the county and within the boundaries of the San Diego County Water Authority (CWA). The RWQCB Stormwater Permit requires the County, the Port District and each city in the County, to adopt an ordinance or similar mechanism to implement the requirements of the Stormwater Permit. If you operate in multiple cities you may have different requirements within each city, and these requirements may be different from those of the County. Contact the city(s) where you operate to find out what their requirements are.

Facilities and activities that are subject to the Stormwater Permit and which have agricultural characteristics such as the use of pesticides, fertilizer and irrigation include: Nurseries and Greenhouses, Golf Courses, Pest Control Businesses, Botanical Gardens and Zoos, and Cemeteries.

DISCHARGE PROHIBITIONS

The County's Stormwater Ordinance contains three broad discharge prohibitions:

Discharge of Pollutants - The direct or indirect discharge of pollutants in stormwater or non-stormwater to a stormwater conveyance system is prohibited unless specifically exempted and/or unless specific conditions are met.

Illegal Connections - The establishment of Illegal connections that directly or indirectly convey pollutants (whether in non-stormwater runoff or stormwater runoff) to a stormwater conveyance is prohibited, even if the connection was established pursuant to a valid county permit and was legal at the time it was constructed.

Potential Causes of Pollutant Discharge - Throwing, depositing, leaving, abandoning, maintaining, or keeping materials or wastes on public or private lands in a manner and place where they may result in an illegal discharge is prohibited.

STANDARDS MANUAL

The requirements of the Stormwater Ordinance vary depending upon the type of facility and activity of the discharger. Appendix A of the County Stormwater Ordinance is the Stormwater Standards Manual. In the Standards Manual you will find the specific types of Best Management Practices (BMPs) that must be implemented to prevent or reduce the discharge of pollutants in runoff water. Many agricultural enterprises have a business headquarters facility and/or equipment yard from which field operations and activities are directed. There are specific BMPs in the manual that apply to both facilities and activities.

Exceptions and Exemptions

Some types of agricultural operations have been granted waivers by the RWQCB. The waivers provide exemptions from the discharge requirements of the County and City Stormwater Ordinances. However those facilities and activities that are included in the County and City Stormwater Ordinances are not exempt from other requirements of these ordinances including the implementation of BMPs. Additionally, many agricultural facilities and activities including field agriculture and animal feeding operations for which there are waivers, are also required to complete an enrollment process with the RWQCB and comply with the California Non-Point Source Management Plan.

FEES

If you operate a facility or conduct activities that are subject to inspection by the County Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measure's Water Quality Program (generally those which are located within the unincorporated portion of the County that is within the boundaries of the County Water Authority, or outside this area and served by public water supply) you will be receiving an additional notice and billing as authorized by the Board of Supervisors. Fees include an annual registration fee of \$100 for which you will receive an invoice. Annual inspection fees of \$60 per hour and reinspection fees of \$90 per hour are due and payable at the time of inspection.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. Obtain a copy of the Stormwater Regulations that apply to your business.
2. Conduct your own assessment of your facilities and activities.
3. Implement a self-monitoring program. Learn what is in the water leaving your property and know where the drains on your property go. Make a map of the drains and watercourses on your property.
4. Train your employees on stormwater and non-stormwater runoff regulatory requirements.
5. Store your chemicals and other materials in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
6. Make sure that containers are securely closed and in good condition
7. Keep vehicle wash water on your property.
8. Maintain vegetation on your property. Vegetation acts as a natural filter while stabilizing soil and reducing sediment damage downstream.
9. Consider weather conditions and irrigation schedules before applying chemicals.
10. Consider the characteristics of the pesticides you use. Are they highly water-soluble? Are there effective less toxic alternatives?
11. Do not allow pesticides to drift from the target site
12. Manage roads on the property you operate.
13. Collect, treat and recycle runoff

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The County of San Diego has the responsibility and authority to ensure that businesses are not operating in a manner that would contribute pollutants to stormwater and non-stormwater runoff. Violators may be fined or other enforcement actions may be taken. Your help in reducing pesticide runoff and other runoff will contribute to improving the water quality of regional estuaries, bays, lagoons and the ocean.

The Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures' Internet web site can be accessed at www.sdawm.org On the department's homepage you will find a sub-heading titled Managing Agricultural Runoff. Click on this heading and you will be taken to a site which contains links to information that may be helpful to you and your employees in understanding and managing runoff from both stormwater and irrigation runoff

If you would like additional information concerning Stormwater Management, Stormwater Permit requirements or other aspects of the water quality regulatory process, please contact Supervising Agricultural/Standards Inspector, **Paul Davy**, at **858-694-3122** or by email at: **paul.davy@sdcounty.ca.gov**